

FWP COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: October 13, 2011

Agenda Item: Blackfoot Access Group

Division: Law Enforcement and Wildlife

Action Needed:

_____ **Approval of Proposed (Tentative) Rule**

_____ **Approval of Final Rule/Action**

_____ **Endorse Course of Action**

X None ; Information only

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: ½ Hour

Background (Brief description of the issue, decision to be made, history, etc.): Montana established a number of privileges to aid disabled citizens in being able to participate in outdoor recreation. Of particular note is the Permit to Hunt from a Vehicle (PTHV) which over the course of the last several years has become very popular. The Blackfoot Access Group is comprised of a number of disabled hunters and anglers, other sportspeople and landowners that has taken a great interest in issues surrounding the abuse of PTHV that they have experienced and have also been documented by FWP wardens. The group approached the Enforcement Bureau in hopes of beginning efforts under which the current rules and laws could be refined so as to keep these important entities relegated to those who genuinely and honestly are disabled and need the permits in order to hunt. The Wildlife Bureau is gathering information on how the ability for holders of PTHV as well as youth hunters to take either sex elk in certain districts without drawing a permit may have affected area wildlife populations.

Public Involvement Process & Results (Brief description of the type of public involvement and summary of what we heard from the public): At this point, the Blackfoot group is approaching the Commission on an informational level only but would like to see a portion of a work session dedicated to this issue in the not too distant future. They are also working with other organizations across the state that involve or represent disabled persons in order to gain a broader base of support for their efforts.

Alternatives and Analysis (Brief description of alternative solutions with analysis of the pros and cons of each): The group has stated that they want to see a change in the rules and laws so as to guarantee PTHV's are granted only to those who meet the qualifying criteria. They have considered proposing narrowing the criteria so as to accomplish this. This would have to be statutory. The Commission, however, does have the ability to address the issue of either-sex elk hunting by holders of PTHV as part of the season-setting process.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale (Brief description of our recommendation to the Commission and the reasons for it): None at this time. Enforcement is simply providing technical support to the group, enabling them to look at the issue and providing them with information through Wildlife & Com Ed.

Proposed Motion (Draft language the Commission could use to adopt the agency recommendation):
None at this time.

Attachment: PTHV numbers 2002 to 2010.